

ing experiments with the dry alcoholic extract, as prepared by Merk. In doses of three sixths of a grain, L. states, the extract was valuable in the violent coughs of phthisis, without causing any bad symptoms. Given to a healthy person the drug produced profound sleep, slight heaviness in the head in the morning, slight enlargement of the pupil, but no effect on pulse, temperature or diuresis. Frommüller has made 103 experiments with the drug altogether, using different preparations. The patients fell asleep within one half to two thirds of an hour after taking the dry alcoholic extract, and had no after-effects. In five cases the drug proved useless. Compared with opium piscidia is inferior to it in narcotic power, but the piscidia-narcosis is milder and less dangerous, does not constipate, produces no itching, and has no influence on pulse, secretion of the urine or sweat. Piscidia acts also as an anæsthetic.—*Therapeutic Gaz.*, Feb. 16, 1885.

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FACIAL NEURALGIA TREATED BY NERVE VIBRATION (*Practitioner*, Nov., 1884).—Dr. William H. Neale reports an obstinate case of neuralgia cured by this method. Since December, 1878, the date of the first attack, the patient had suffered every year from repeated attacks of facial neuralgia, lasting many days at a time. The attack under consideration returned January, 1884. The pain began in the right side of the head, spreading to right eye and down the cheek. From January to June there had hardly been twenty-four hours free from pain. Every time the patient attempted to eat or drink he received a sharp twinge, and for many hours every day his life was a burden to him. Drugs had been tried for four months without effect. On June 7th, Dr. N. decided to try nerve vibration. The percuteur was applied nearly every day, dispelling the pain each time after a few moments' percussion, though there was more or less return after a number of hours. At the end of eighteen days the pain and tenderness disappeared for good. On Oct. 24th the patient still continued well. The relief obtained by percussion was immediate each time, though the effect for a minute or two at first was apt to be to intensify the pain. Continued percussion then dispelled the pain.

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OSMIC ACID IN NEURALGIA.—Dr. D. Mohr reports a case of rheumatic sciatica cured by two injections of a Pravatz syringe-ful of a one-per-cent. solution of osmic acid in the neighborhood of the sciatic notch (*Wien. med. Wochens.*). Prof. Leichtenstern has treated seventeen cases of obstinate neuralgia by this method. The results were considered favorable, as repeated temporary improvements were obtained, while in some cases cures were effected. No improvement was obtained in a case of pseudo-neuralgia due to cancer of the spinal column, in neurasthenic neuralgia, and in old chronic sciatica. In the majority of cases L. observed severe pain following immediately after the injection, and frequently a peculiar form of necrosis and inflammation of the

skin, with the formation of vesicles containing blood. On this account L. warns against injections in the face.—*Deutsche mediz. Zeit.*

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THE TREATMENT OF OPIUM ADDICTION (*St. Louis Courier of Medicine*, Dec., 1884).—In a very elaborate and positive article, Dr. J. B. Mattison returns to the treatment of the opium habit. He speaks strongly and positively against the sudden withdrawal of the drug, declaring such a method to be unnecessary, that it entails horrible suffering, is barbarous, inexcusable, mal-practice, etc. M.'s method is the one he has advocated before, namely, the gradual withdrawal of opium, combined with "preliminary sedation," by means of bromide of sodium, to diminish reflex irritation. His plan is to keep the system continually under the bromide influence from the beginning. The bromide must be given in full doses. The initial dose is 60 grains twice daily at twelve hours' intervals, increasing the amount 20 grains each day, *i. e.*, 70, 80, 90 grains per dose, and continuing it five to seven days, reaching a maximum dose of 100 to 120 grains twice in twenty-four hours. During this time of bromide medication, the usual opiate is gradually reduced, so that from the eighth to the tenth day it is entirely abandoned. A decrease of one quarter or one third the usual daily quantity is made at the outset, experience having shown that habitués are almost always using an amount in excess of their natural need, and this reduction occasions little or no discomfort. Subsequently the opiate withdrawal is more or less rapid according to increasing sedation, the object being to meet and overcome the rising nervous disturbance by the growing effect of the sedative; in other words, maximum sedation at the time of maximum irritation. Each case must be treated according to its individual peculiarities, as regards amount of bromide given and rate of decrease of opium, the guide being the effect produced. Elaborate details are given for the treatment of after-effects, etc. Coca, Indian hemp, hot baths, and electricity are recommended as adjuvants for restlessness and insomnia. He insists that Indian hemp must be given in full doses of 60 minims of the fluid extract. M. recommends the administration of opium by the mouth instead of subcutaneously. It is not necessary to put the patient under surveillance or restriction of any kind. M. speaks strongly against the method advocated by Levinstein, and gives a rose-colored account of the results obtained by his own measures.

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ERGOT OF RYE—AN INVESTIGATION INTO ITS ACTIVE PRINCIPLES (*Practitioner*, Dec., 1884).—Dr. R. Kobert publishes the result of his investigations. Ergot contains ergotinic acid, sphacelinic acid and cornutin. 1. The ergotinic acid is the active principle of Bonjean's extract, of Wernich's dialysed ergotine, and of the sclerotinic acid of Dragendorff and Podwyssotzki. It does not cause uterine contractions nor gangrene, but paralysis, commen-